

**Minutes of the Planning Commission Regular Meeting of Tuesday, October 2, 2018
Council Chambers, One Twin Pines Lane, Belmont, CA**

ROLL CALL 7:00 P.M.

Planning Commission members Present: Majeski, Pyrz, Hendrix, Goldfarb, McCune, Kramer, Meola

Staff Present: Community Development Director de Melo, Associate Planner Dietz, and Administrative Assistant Lynn

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Led by Commission Chair Goldfarb.

COMMUNITY FORUM

There were no speakers from the public.

COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS / AGENDA AMENDMENTS

None

CONSENT CALENDAR

A. Minutes of September 18, 2018

ACTION: Meeting Minutes approved 7 Ayes, 0 Noes

STUDY SESSION

None

PUBLIC HEARINGS

7. A. 2710 Ralston Avenue- Amendment to prior project to allow a 36 square foot increase to approved project

Commissioners stated that no ex-parte communications were made.

Associate Planner Dietz provided an overview of the staff report and project history to consider an amendment to a prior project approval (January 16, 2018) to allow a 36 square foot increase to a previously approved 1,461 square foot upper floor addition to the Fellowship Bible Church. Staff stated all findings are in the affirmative and recommended project approval.

Chair Goldfarb invited the applicant to speak. No comments were made.

COMMISSION COMMENTS

Commissioner McCune recommended the modified components of the development standards table of data be added to future staff reports.

In response to Commissioner Meola, staff confirmed that some trees were going to be removed for additional parking, a bio retention basin, and some trees were dying.

In response to Commissioner Hendrix and Goldfarb, staff confirmed the findings are for modifications for the 36 square foot addition only. This additional area was a storage room that they found they could use as additional floor space after the original plans had been approved.

Chair Goldfarb opened the Public Hearing. No speakers came forward.

Chair Goldfarb closed the Public Hearing.

Commissioners all concurred in approval and made the findings.

ACTION: On a motion by Commissioner McCune, seconded by Commissioner Hendrix to approve a modification to the previously-approved conditional use permit, design review, and tree removal permit at 2710 Ralston Avenue. (Application No. 2017-0012)

Motion passed unanimously 7-0 (7 Ayes, 0 No)

Chair Goldfarb stated this item is appealable within 10 calendar days.

7. B. 2812 Monte Cresta Drive – Single-Family Design Review

Commissioners stated that no ex-parte communications were made.

Associate Planner Dietz provided a presentation and summarized the staff report to consider a Single-Family Design Review to construct a new single-family residence totaling 3,459 square feet. It was noted that there was a typo in the staff report for the average slope. The site conditions have been correctly noted with the 27.8% average slope.

Staff noted the following:

- The driveway encroaches on 2814 Monte Cresta; also owned by the same property owner.
- The rooftop deck with a railing is not included in the height limit as it is mandated by the Building Code for safety.
- Applicant proposed a shared Access Easement for the driveway. The easement will be recorded for both properties prior to Building Permit issuance.
- The Fire Department required stairs and supporting retaining wall for emergency access to the site. The Public Works Director recommended approval of the Permanent Encroachment Agreement for placement in the public right-of-way.

Staff stated all findings are made in the affirmative and recommended approval of the Single-Family Design Review, and recommended City Council approval of the Permanent Encroachment Agreement.

Chair Goldfarb invited the applicant to speak. No comments were made.

In response to Commissioner Kramer, staff noted that uncovered decks are not calculated in the floor area total unless they are fully enclosed.

Commissioner Pyrz indicated there was already an existing stairwell on the right of the property and asked if any effort had gone in to considering the use of the existing stairs to the adjacent property instead of going through the encroachment route. Per staff, the Fire Department was firm in the requirement to install direct stairway access given the topography and challenges of the site.

Kari Pulli, Property owner, stated the Fire Department wanted stairs installed that would not burn, and the existing stairs are wood.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION

In response to Commissioner comments, staff stated the following:

- With the approval of the single-family design review and the Commission's recommendation of approval for the Permanent Encroachment Agreement to City Council, it is rare for Council to deny said encroachment permit. Should the Council deny this permit, the project will need to be rereviewed for access considerations. The modified plans would need to be reviewed by the appropriate departments to be sure they conform to standards, and the revised project would go back to the Planning Commission for approval.
- The deck railing does not count against height requirements in this situation due to enforcement of the building code. If a railing is proposed as a stylistic/architectural choice, then it would count toward the height limit.
- Both property owners are responsible for the maintenance of the proposed easement that runs through both properties. The County will not accept recording of the easement unless both property owners sign the agreement, and it is recorded against both properties.

Chair Goldfarb opened the Public Hearing. No speakers came forward.

Chair Goldfarb closed the Public Hearing.

COMMISSION COMMENTS

In response to Commissioner comments regarding building height, staff stated that development standard compliance will be addressed via the Conditions of Approval. Inspections by the Building Department take place throughout the build process to ensure conformance. Code Enforcement will get involved when they are non-compliant.

Marja Parnanen, Applicant, stated the design of the home has an optimum height, however, there is flexibility in the second-floor room height if a modification needs to be made to adjust height. Additionally, the HVAC unit will be located on the ground level.

Kari Pulli, property owner, indicated the north end of the roof top is the highest point and it is the only point that could breach the height limit. They can tilt the roof down for drainage and ensure it stays within the height limit.

Commissioners all concurred in approval and made the findings.

ACTION: On a motion by Commissioner Majeski, seconded by Commissioner McCune to approve a Single-Family Design Review for a vacant lot on Monte Cresta Drive (Application No. PA2018-0066)

Motion passed unanimously 7-0 (7 Ayes, 0 No)

Chair Goldfarb stated this item is appealable within 10 calendar days.

ACTION: On a motion by Commissioner Majeski, seconded by Commissioner Kramer to recommend City Council Approval of a Permanent Encroachment permit for a retaining wall and stairs within the public right-of-way at 2812 Monte Cresta Drive (Application No. 2018-0066)

Motion passed unanimously 7-0 (7 Ayes, 0 No)

Chair Goldfarb stated this item is appealable within 10 calendar days.

7. C. 2004 Mezes Avenue – Single-Family Design Review

Commissioners stated that no ex-parte communications were made.

Associate Planner Dietz provided a presentation and summarized the staff report to consider a Single-Family Design Review to demolish a portion of an existing house that spans two lots and construct an addition resulting in a total of 3,499 square feet. Findings were made in the affirmative and staff recommended approval.

Chair Goldfarb invited the applicant to speak. No comments were made.

In response to Commissioners, staff stated the following

- Parking would remain the same and compliant with the zoning code.
- The abutting vacant lot may experience future development, and zoning code compliance will be required.
- The garage is counted as floor area space, although it is used as parking. Windows were added due to the height of the garage to break up the massing.

Chair Goldfarb opened the Public Hearing.

Karen Shane, neighbor, spoke in favor of the project.

Denise Faleschini, neighbor, spoke in opposition of the project due to views impacted and privacy.

Chair Goldfarb closed the Public Hearing.

In response to the impacted views and privacy, staff indicated that the single-family design review finding deals with public views, not private views. A public view is assessed from a public vantage point. Privacy factors come into play in the findings when there is a floor area exception proposed. Under the single-family design review, neither private views nor privacy come into play. Staff's evaluation of the project found no public view impacts for this project.

COMMISSION COMMENTS

Commissioners understood neighbors' concerns. Commissioners all concurred in approval and made the findings.

ACTION: On a motion by Commissioner Meola, seconded by Commissioner McCune to approve a Single-Family Design Review at 2004 Mezes Avenue. (Application No. 2018-0047)

Carlo Campobello, property owner, stated he would communicate with the subject neighbor regarding the abutting vacant lot.

Motion passed 7-0 (7 Ayes, 0 No)

Chair Goldfarb stated this item is appealable within 10-calendar days.

OTHER BUSINESS / UPDATES

Community Development Director noted the following updates:

- Ralston Avenue/South Road signal will be fully operational by the week of October 9th.
- The October 16th Commission Meeting is cancelled.

ADJOURNMENT at this time being 8:28 PM to a regular meeting of the Planning Commission to be held at a future date. Public Notice as required will be issued in advance of the next Commission Meeting.

Diane Lynn
Administrative Assistant

Meeting televised and web streamed